

City News

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

88184 Eighth Street
PO Box 458
Veneta, OR 97487
(541) 935-2191

<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/>

The Park Board: planning fun for everyone

By Ephraim Payne

Who are the Veneta Park Board? They are the heroes behind the scenes of the City's parks and pool and popular annual events such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt and Earth Day.

The Board's mission includes implementing the City's 1998 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master plan, creating recreational opportunities and promoting citizen involvement and a strong sense of com-

munity while striving to increase the social, cultural, and physical well-being of residents and visitors.

The board of between 5 and 9 volunteers, appointed by the mayor and City Council, conducts a monthly meeting open to the public every first Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. at City Hall. Board sub-committees meet throughout the month.

Members' four-year terms are staggered so that one or two end each

Spring, preserving board continuity.

Current board members include Barbara Nelson, Cathy Coulson-Keegan, Craig Soderberg, Dennis Paronto, Marie Pickett, Daphene Sampson and Board Chair Gail Wilkie, while Olivia Ponce and Brittany Glenzer serve as student representatives. For more on this and other Park Board issues, see the expanded version of the City News online at www.ci.veneta.or.us

An eventful month

By Ephraim Payne

Are you ready to shake off winter's grip and get outside this April? The Veneta Park Board and its many partners can help thanks to a slew of events slated to take place in the coming month.

The City Easter Egg Hunt and the annual Arbor/Earth Day celebration are April favorites in Veneta. This year, the Park Board's big events share the civic calendar with the dedication of the new transit center and the grand opening of the West Broadway business district.

The festivities kick off April 23 with the Easter Egg Hunt, held for the second time at Veneta Elementary School. The event begins with storytelling courtesy of the Fern Ridge Library from 10:30 to 11 a.m. in the gym.

The hunt itself begins at 11 a.m. As usual, the Easter Bunny will make an appearance, arriving in style on a Lane County Fire District No. 1 truck. Grandma Bunny will put in an appearance as well,

See APRIL EVENTS page 2

Board to build community volunteer database

By Ephraim Payne

The core of dedicated, civic-minded citizens — who for years have volunteered for various Fern Ridge non-profit organizations — have coined a tongue-in-cheek name for themselves, "The Tired Ten", though the group is really a bit bigger than that.

This year, the Park Board will work to change that by creating an online database of open volunteer positions throughout the community, complete with job descriptions, and

the contact information of willing volunteers.

"We'd really like to bring in some new faces and beef up the volunteer force," said Park Board Chair Gail Wilkie. "It will really help change the face of the Park Board and what's happening in the community."

Wilkie says support for single day events like egg-stuffing for the annual Easter Egg Hunt show that many community members will volunteer if they have a clear idea of what needs to be done and the time involved.

The plan to create an online community volunteer database is not new. According to Veneta Mayor Sharon Hobart-Hardin, the community has been interested in creating such a data base for several years.

She says keeping the list updated will be an important part of the project and suggests that outside grant funding may be necessary, though hard to come by. Wilkie says the Park Board will look to City Officials for guidance in actualizing their goal.

The City of Veneta is offering a reward of \$500 for information leading to the successful arrest and conviction of parties responsible for the ongoing vandalism of private property in the Cornerstone Way development.

Veneta's parks: a brand-new pool, playgrounds and much more.

By Ephraim Payne

The City's recreational infrastructure runs the gamut from parks and playgrounds spread throughout the neighborhoods to a pool complex that took a concerted community effort to create. These facilities provide a diverse array of recreational opportunities to Fern Ridge area residents.

The new pool has proved itself a hit since its opening last June, after a long fundraising campaign to replace the old municipal pool destroyed by flooding in 2006, attracting city residents and visitors from the greater Fern Ridge community alike. Veneta's skate park, a key feature of Territorial Park, is very popular with the City's youth as is the Bolton Hill Sports Complex, where the Territorial Sports Program sponsors youth athletic leagues. Other parks include the City Park and Community Center at the end of East Broadway Ave., Oak Island Park on Oak Island Dr., Ralph Johnson Park at the corner of 5th St. and Dunham Ave., 5th Street Park

between Hunter Ave. and Woodland Ave. and Fern Park on 8th St. south of Parkside Dr.

City parks are generally open from dawn until dusk, while the pool has its own schedule during the summer. The pool had a good first season, serving several thousand visitors. The upcoming season, as with last year, will feature a varied schedule of activities, with a continued focus on recreational swimming and youth lessons. Many patrons participated in water aerobics classes last year and this summer will see a continuation and possible expansion of fitness classes.

"It seemed to be very well received by the community; we got a lot of users" said Veneta Community Services Director Brian Issa of the new pool. "Once again, we'll work to create a balanced schedule accommodating all users."

The Veneta Community Pool has its own homepage on the City website, where information about the pool and a seasonal schedule are available:

<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/pool.cfm>

Issa notes that residents who have not visited Fern Park on 8th Street recently should stop by for a visit. Thanks to a recent land acquisition, the park has doubled in size. Public Works employees and volunteers will be installing a new play structure and making other improvements to the park in late May.

The Bolton Hill Sports Complex, west of Territorial Hwy. on Bolton Hill road, was expanded with the help of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and Territorial Sports Program to include a total of 11 acres, as well as new back stops, baseball diamonds, fencing and street improvements.

Territorial Park, at Territorial Hwy. and Hunter Ave., features a basketball court, playground, and a quarter mile looping walk/jog path in addition to the skatepark. Information about Veneta's other city parks and an interactive map of the different facilities is available online at

<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/parks.cfm>

April events: There is a lot to celebrate this month in Veneta.

reinforcing the "no tears" policy the Park Board and co-sponsors — the Kiwanis of Fern Ridge, LCFD No. 1, the library, Neighbors 4 Responsible Growth, Boy Scout Troup 54 and the Elmira Key Club — have instituted for the hunt.

"It's been going on for a long time now," says Park Board Chair Gail Wilkie of the hunt, which served about 300 kids last year. "We're really growing it, enhancing it. It's just a well-loved event."

The Park Board is hosting a pre-hunt egg-stuffing party April 16 at the Community Center at 10 a.m. Local residents are welcome to drop by and help out.

The fun continues April 29 with the 1 p.m. dedication of Lane Transit District's new park and ride facility at the southwest corner of Territorial Hwy. and W. Broadway Ave. The event will highlight the partnership between LTD, the City of Veneta, Oregon Department of Transportation's Connect Oregon program, Lane County Public Works and others involved in developing the transit center.

Veneta Mayor Sharon Hobart-Hardin will MC the event. Invited guests include state Representative Paul Holvey, Senator Floyd Prozanski and County Commissioner Jay Bozevich and other state and local officials.

Fern Ridge residents can celebrate Veneta's continued recognition as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation. As usual, the Park Board will combine the Arbor Day

festivities with a commemoration of Earth Day. The 4th Annual Arbor/Earth Day Celebration will be held on Saturday April 30 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at 2nd & Broadway in downtown Veneta.

"Veneta combines the events due to the close proximity of their calendar dates," says Park Board member Daphne Sampson. "This presents an opportunity for local agencies to continue to raise environmental awareness within our community, and a chance for neighbors and community members to come together to celebrate Arbor/Earth Day by giving back to their community through support of the event and volunteerism."

Event partners include the Park Board, City of Veneta and Oregon Department of Forestry. The Celebration will feature presentations every half hour, various vendor booths and award presentation to honor the City's Tree City USA status, awarded for Veneta's commitment to urban forestry. Fun and educational activities will including tree planting, games and raffle, green ideas and demonstrations, storytelling and other activities for the kids.

The City will dedicate Veneta's new Downtown Business District at the conclusion of the Arbor/Earth Day Celebration, from 2 to 2:30 p.m. The dedication will include comments by Mayor Hobart-Hardin and a ceremonial cake cutting.

For more information about April's events, visit the City website at www.ci.veneta.or.us